

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the First

VISITATION

OF THE

Right Reverend FATHER in God,

R A L P H

Lord BISHOP of

CHICHESTER,

Holden there *Septemb. 20th. 1675.*

BY

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Fittleworth in Suffex.

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Contents.
The Majesty of Rite in a Nation & of Gods Providence
over it p. 1, 2.

That y^e Clergy have a Care y^t neither Rapine
nor Riches prove a Scandall. 14. 15.

Nor promising nor Gross Accidents in y^e word to either
or discourage a Clergy man. 14, 15. }

or make him unwelcome of his Ministry

K An Inspection into y^e Ministry & considering of it
not only to be learned to his selfe but to others also ^{16, 17}
Soe to take heed of y^e Ministry y^t he might call it in
A clergy man to be a faithful Steward. 18.

Howe to fulfill y^e Ministry as well in life as well as in y^e
Exercise of its Function. 19. 20.

To give noe offence in any thing y^e Ministry be as
blameless. 20.

Clergy to imitate y^e 1st of Tim. 4. 19. p. 21.

To keep up to the high Honor of being Ministers, Stewards

& Embassadors of y^e King of Heav'n 23.

As Embassadors of y^e King they are to keep up y^e high Character

As he be faithful to y^e King & Master 24.

Ministers not immediately s^t from God but empowered
over in Commission 24.

Application to y^e Clergy 26.



TO
The Right Reverend Father in God,
R A L P H
Lord BISHOP of *Chichester*.

Right Reverend Father in God,

W*Ere not the eyes of the World dazzled
with the Tinsel of its one vanity, it
would certainly discern Reason to be
far from casting contempt upon the
Clergie, especially upon those of it that labour in
the Word and Doctrine, but rather to esteem
them very highly in love for their work sake;
because the design of it is, not more to promote the
glory of God, than the good of Men, in any or all
their capacities, and that in this World as well as
that which is to come; for the end of the Com-
mandment is charity; and Charity (as Johannes
Climacus hath well described it) is the resem-
blance of God, the fountain of faith and vera-*

1 Tim. i. 5.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Seal. par. ad.
grad. 30.

city, the depth of equity and meekness, the ocean of Humility and the abdication of every averse thought. *If then men were duely wrought upon and transformed by the Gospel, what manner of persons would they be? how delightful and profitable both to themselves and others, how quiet and peaceable, as well as pure and holy would their lives be, in all godliness and honesty? yet the Age we live in is thought so degenerate, as that that of the Poet,*

Qvid.

Aut petis, aut urges ruiturum Sisyphæ saxum,
is most frequently too applicable to each of us in our attempts to make it better; insomuch that if in this life only we had hope, we were of all men most unhappy, because most prosperous and unsuccessful in the work of our calling. Yet the dreadful bonds of our Office oblige us to continue in it, and it in meekness we instruct those that oppose themselves, we have the encouragement not only of strong confidence that we shall deliver our own Souls, but also of a peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth. Having therefore received your Lordships command to preach at the Visitation, I thought it my duty rather to run the hazard of being thought pragmatical, than to trifle away an opportunity of doing good, by being impertinent: hereupon I took
the

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*the boldness to endeavour a description of Archippus his Ministry, duty and obligations to perform it, that seeing we also have the same Ministry, our minds might be stirred up by way of remembrance, that we faint not, but by manifestation of the truth, commend our selves to every mans conscience in the sight of God; the design I am sure was so good, as that if I could perswade my self to believe I had well managed it, I should readily subscribe to your Lordships judgment, that the Sermon is fitting to be seen; but whether it be or no, it was your Lordships pleasure (and that in the audience of the Clergie there present) to command me either to Print it my self, or to deliver it to your Lordship, that so it might be committed to the Press. I humbly acknowledg the greatness of your Lordships favour in conferring the Honour of such a Command upon me; yet I cannot obey it without reluctance, because (though I should belye my self, if I should say, I thought my discourse altogether useles, yet) I cannot judge it worthy of a publick View. But since your Lordship was pleased, before a cloud of witnesses, to command its being exposed thereunto, I dare not disobey, lest I should add a kind of scandal to disobedience, the prohibition of your Lordships command: I cannot request without the rudeness of offering to derive on
your*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

your Lordship the imputations of rashness or levity: the performance of it I cannot omit, without exposing my self to the Animadversions of my Brethren for disobedience to my most reverend Diocesan: I must therefore beg of your Lordship to allow this weak discourse the benefit and favour, which nature affords its tender off-spring, and that is to take Shelter under your Lordships Patronage, as that doth under the Protection of those, from whom it draws (as this from your Lordships command) its breath and being. If this be granted, although perhaps it will not stop the censures of the Supercilious, yet it will take out their sting, and make them harmless to

Your Lordships

most obliged in all duty and
humble observance,

William Howell.



COLOSS. Chap. IV. vers. 17.

*And say to Archippus, Take heed to the Ministry,
which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.*



PICURUS his Dogma
(That the blessed and immortal Being hath no affairs of its own, nor doth it intermeddle with those of others) is so precarious an Hypothesis, as that the very being of the Ministry (were there no other Arguments) would

Diog. Laert.
lib. 10.

be sufficient to refute it; for it seems founded in the Law of our Nature, whence else is it, that it is almost as easie to find a Nation without Soules, as without any Religion of one kind or other? and almost as easie it is to find a Religion without reference to God, as one without some pretenders to Authority to undertake its defence and administration. The Gentiles had their *Vates* and *Sacerdotes*, as well as the Jews their *Prophets*, *Priests* and *Levites*, and
B the

A Visitation Sermon.

the Christians their *Pastours and Teachers for the Work of the Ministry*. It seems then (unless the seat of the Scornful be an infallible Chair) either *Epicurus* herein was not wise, or else all men beside him were deluded Fools: for hereby it is plain, that they thought the blessed and immortal Being did so far intermeddle with the affairs of men, as to appoint some to be the Salt of the Earth, to purge out the feculence and dregs of Ignorance and Atheism, to season mens Souls, and make them favoury and grateful to God, or at least to keep them from the corruption and putrefaction of infidelity and irreligion.

Now that this Salt should not lose its favour is, I conceive, the chief design of this days Work; in subservience hereunto I have made choice of these words. I hope none here present will thence take occasion of thinking, that I take upon me to censure my Brethren, as some say Saint *Paul* did *Archippus*, viz. That he was remiss and negligent in the work of his Ministry: but there is no necessity of so thinking, nor indeed any good reason for it; for since Saint *Paul* did *Archippus* the honour to call him his *Fellow-Souldier*, it is very unlikely that *Archippus* wanted either vigilance or courage in using the Weapons of his Warfare. To me therefore it seems much more probable, that the strength and subtilty of the Enemy, the prevalence of Error and Heresie, of Vice and Wick- edness was then the occasion of Saint *Paul's* sending, as it is now of my chusing this Text, which of it self falls into three parts, viz.

Phil. 2.

I. Saint

1. *Saint Paul's Charge.*
2. *Archippus his Duty.*
3. *The reason of it.*

I begin with Saint Paul's charge, *And say to Archippus*: but who must say to *Archippus*? the *Colossians*: but had they power to admonish their Minister? Yes, saith Calvin, Saint Paul might have admonished him in his own private name, but he enjoins this on the *Colossians*, that they might know, that they also ought to give incitement to their Pastour, if they see him cold; and the Pastour should not refuse admonition from the Church. But what admonition must he submit unto? take an Answer from Pareus, who (among other *porismata*) draws these two from these words: In Loc.

1. *The Church hath right to admonish, or also to reprove and depose its Minister, that keeps not within the bounds of his Office, either by neglecting it, or not rightly performing it.*

2. *The Pastour ought to submit himself to the mature judgement of the Church, and humbly acknowledge from whom he hath received his Office.*

But I pray what Church is this, whereunto the Pastour must submit himself and make his humble acknowledgements? why here we are left to guess; only our Author tells us, *A small Assembly deserves the name of a Church*. Had he thought fit to have spoken plainly, 'tis manifestly most likely he would have said, that by the Church he understood a *Presbyterian Consistory*: for this Church (whatever

A Visitation Sermon.

it be in it self) must needs have the government on its shoulder, and in contradistinction to its Pastour, it must needs consist either of the Laity or inferiour Officers, or joyntly of both. To these then it is, that they ascribe right to admonish, reprove and depose their Pastour. But surely Saint *Paul* hath taught them no such thing; for not only the Examination and Ordination, but also the Admonition, Suspension and Deposition of Ministers, he hath reserved (as appears very fully by his Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*) to such as they were, *i. e.* to Bishops. Thus surely the Primitive Church understood him, for not only by divers of those Canons, which are said to be the Apostles, but also by the Fifth Canon of the First, the Sixth of the Second, the Fifth of the Third, the Eighth and the Ninth of the Fourth general Council, all the Censures of the Church, or the exercise of Ecclesiastical Discipline was put into the hands of the Bishops. In matters Ecclesiastical no Lay-men (except the Emperour) were to judge the Clergy; all others were allowed only to be Witnesses against them, nor were they allowed that neither, while they were under sentence of Excommunication, or the imputation of Heresie, Schisme, or any other grievous crime. But in case any thing were objected by credible persons against any Clergy-man under the Order of a Bishop, the Bishop of the Diocess was to judge of it, and inflict punishment for it; but in case the party accused did not acquiesce in the Censure of his Diocesan, there was liberty of Appeal.

Can. 32, 37,

74.

Conc. Nic.

Can. 5.

Conc. Const.

Can. 7.

Conc. Ephes

Can. 5.

Conc. Cha'c.

Can. 8, 9.

Conc. Constant.

Can. 6.

peal to a Provincial Synod, *i. e.* to a Synod where-
in all the Bishops of the Province were to be ga-
thered together for the examination and decision
of such Controversies; which Provincial Synod,
the first Council of *Nice* appointed to be held Can. 5:
twice in a year. Although afterwards by reason
of the incursions of barbarous Nations, and o-
ther causes incident, these Synods were held but
once in the year; yet from that time till the year
1541. or thereabouts, when *Calvin's* platform Concil. in
Trullo can. 8.
first drew breath at *Geneva*, I cannot finde it
was ever appointed that Ministers (for matters
appertaining to their Office) should be admo-
nished, much less deposed by the Laity, or the
Clergy (in their own Churches) inferiour to them.
If then that had been the Discipline appointed
by Christ, and here required by Saint *Paul*,
how wonderful a thing is it, that the Church so
soon after their departure out of the World,
should change it for another? Very strange and
almost impossible it is, that the whole Church of
Christ for above a thousand years together should
either wholly forget my Text, or else be igno-
rant of its meaning, or so petulantly wicked as
to suppress and act contrary to it; yet so it seems
it was, till the World was blessed with such Com-
ments as those before mentioned; whereby the
people may understand their priviledge to teach
and admonish their Teachers, and to contend
with Gods Ministers in matters too high for their
capacities. But we have not so learned to expound
the holy Scripture.

Observe

In ver. 16.

Observe therefore, that this Charge of Saint *Paul* concerning *Archippus* is ushered in with the copulative Conjunction *and*, which I think is seldom or never so used, as to joyn Words and Sentences together which have no connection in Nature or Signification: if so, then thence it may probably be conjectured, that the Charge in this Verse is connected in its kind or nature, as well as scituation, with that that we find immediatly foregoing: and what is that? why it is another charge that Saint *Paul* gives concerning this Epistle now written, and another (whatever it was) from *Laodicea*, that this should be read in the Church of the *Laodiceans*, and that that should be read in the Church of the *Colossians*. The designed end of this Charge manifestly is to uphold Communion between these two Churches, that they might edifie each other in love. Saint *Chrysostome* therefore bids his Reader see how he glues and joyns them together, not only by salutations, but also by the mutual exhibition of Epistles: this he does not do rashly, but that he might draw others to the study of the same things. Hereunto the conjunction *and* connects the charge in my Text: think ye then that this hath no affinity with that? That that should tend to the sweet and pleasant imploy of promoting Charity and Communion, but this to the sower ungrateful work of admonition; which (we know) from inferiours is for the most part more apt to engender anger than to produce amendment; that St. *Paul* should require the *Colossians* to hold Communion with

with the *Laodiceans*, their fellow-Christians somewhat remote from them; and then in the very next line charge them to admonish, yea, it may be, chide with and depose *Archippus* their Minister, that laboured or at least lived among them; how unlikely a thing is it, that he should couple such charges together! No saith *St. Chrysostom*, *it was unreasonable to appoint the disciples to admonish their Teacher.* When *Solomon* charged his Son to say unto Wisdom, *Thou art my Sister*; did he thereby constitute his Son to be wisdoms Monitor? No surely, he only enjoined him to love and adhere to her, to be ruled & guided by her: so here when *St. Paul* charges the *Colossians* to say to *Archippus*, he means not to make them his Monitors, but oblige them to be his followers: He especially subjects them to him, for they could no longer complain of him for severity to them, when they themselves had given up themselves in all things unto him; to stop their mouths he writes these things unto them, *in ver. 17.* saith *St. Chrysostom*. Hereby then it seems, that the end and design of this charge was, not that the *Colossians* might admonish *Archippus*, but that they should declare their good affection, submit themselves unto, and unanimously hold communion with him in the exercise of his ministry among them.

And this at that time was an office of Charity very decent and seasonable for *St. Paul* to enjoin, and for the *Colossians* to perform, as well as for *Archippus* to receive from them; for it was the readiest way

A Visitation Sermon.

way that could be to extirpate the seeds of Heresie and Schism that were sown among them, and to make them keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of Peace.

And for this cause in this sense, it would be neither ungrateful to us, nor unseasonable for our Congregations respectively to say to us, as the *Colossians* to *Archippus*: but alas such is the Atheism and profaness or else the factious humor of our age, as that most men are now more apt either to cast off all respect and reverence to their authorized Teachers, or else to say to the little foxes, that spoil our vines, rather than to us, *Take heed to the Ministry which you have received in the Lord that you fulfill it.* And this leads me to

The Second part of my Text, viz. *Archippus* his duty, *Take heed to the Ministry, that thou fulfill it.* In which words we must consider two things, viz. First his Ministry, and then his Duty. As for *Archippus* his Ministry, it is not very easie to determine what it was among the *Colossians*: because

Rom. 11. 13: *S. Paul* useth the word *διακονία*, some think he was but a Deacon; but this is so slender and inconclusive an argument, as that they may as well say, He was an Apostle, because *St. Paul* calls his own office by that name. Others (because it seems *St. Ambrose* saith so) think he was Bishop of *Coloss*; but this cannot well be granted neither, for it is more probably thought, that at that time, not

Archippus

A Visitation Sermon.

9

Archippus but *Epaphras* was Bishop in that City. *St. Paul* himself hath laid the foundation of this conjecture, for he calls *Epaphras* his dear fellow-servant, and tells the *Colossians*, *He is for them a faithful Minister of Christ*, whereby it is plain, He was not an Evangelist only in planting the Gospel, but that he was a settled Minister, or at least designed so to be among them; and since he was *St. Paul's* dear fellow-servant, it is probable he was advanced above the inferiour sort of the Clergy, even to the Apostolical Dignity; for so Saint *Chrysostome* saith of him. But this could not be but by the communication of the ordinary part of the Apostolical Office unto him, which was not to convert Infidels, but to teach and govern those that were converted to the Faith. This was and still is the Office of a Bishop. Thence I conceive it was, that the Primitive Bishops (because of their participation of the Apostolical Office) were sometimes called Apostles; thus *Epaphroditus* was the Apostle of the *Philippians*, *Titus* of the *Cretians*, and *Timothy* of the *Asiatick Christians*; (as *Theodore* it seems testifies very fully.) And thus 'tis like that *Epaphras* was the Apostle, i. e. the Bishop of the *Colossians*; and so I find by *Baronius*, that some ancient Martyrologies say expressly, that he was: and if so (because it was inconsistent with the Primitive Constitutions, that there should be more than one Bishop in one City) it must be concluded, that *Archippus* his Ministry was but the Office of a Priest or Presbyter: yet

Cap. i. 7.

Hom. ult. in Col.

Apud Hammond. dissert. 4. c. 3. sect. 24. p. 186.

Ad an. Ch. 60.

C

at

A Visitation Sermon.

at that time, his Duty, I think, was somewhat enlarged; the Cure he had to supply, the Work he had to do was somewhat greater than ordinary. That you may perceive the reason both of Saint *Paul's* charge, and of this mine opinion, pray be pleased to observe,

That in those places where the Apostles constituted Bishops, the whole work of the Ministry was devolved upon them and their respective Deacons. Thence peradventure it was that *Aerius* took occasion to say, *That a Bishop and a Presbyter are the same.* But *Epiphanius* takes him up very sharply, and tells him, *That being ignorant of the consequence of Truth, and having not read the profoundest Histories, he had not known, that when the Gospel had been preached but a little while, the holy Apostle wrote as occasion required: where there were Bishops then constituted, he wrote to the Bishops and Deacons, and it may be to others elsewhere: For (saith he) the Apostles could not presently constitute and settle all things on a sudden, for there was need of Presbyters and Deacons, that by these two the Ecclesiastical Orders might be compleat: but where there was no person found fitting for the Episcopal Office, there the place remained without a Bishop; but where there was need, and there were some worthy of that Office, there were Bishops constituted: but while Believers were but few in number, there were no Priests or Presbyters found among them; they were content with only a Bishop*
in

A Visitation Sermon.

11

in the place, but without a Deacon a Bishop could not well be; the holy Apostle therefore took care, that there should be Deacons to assist the Bishop in the work of the Ministry. Thus far Epiphanius, whereby it seems, that the Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons were from the beginning, all instituted by the Apostles, but not all in all places of the Church; where there were none found fitting to be Bishops, the places remained without any; yet very unlikely it is that there were none appointed among the Christians in those places to guide their feet in the way of Peace; in all probability therefore the Doctrine of the Church, and the Worship of God was taught and upheld by the Ministry of Priests or Presbyters among them. But in greater places, where there was need of Ecclesiastical Discipline, as well as of Doctrine and Worship, if there were any found fitting to be intrusted with it (as doubtless there was in most, if not all Cities) there were Bishops constituted: and these Bishops (with the assistance of Deacons, while the number of Believers was not great in those places, without any intermediate Presbyters) undertook not only the Regiment of the Church, but the daily performance of all its Offices. Thence no doubt it was that long before Epiphanius, Clemens Romanus observed, That the Apostles preaching the Word in Cities and Countreys constituted the First-fruits of their Ministry to be Bishops and Deacons of th m

Ad Cor p. 54.

C 2 that

A Visitation Sermon.

Lib 5.
Epist. ad
Evag.

1 Tim 3 2.

1 Tim 4. 16.

1 Tim 2. 12.

Can 39.

Can 58.

Can. 121.
& 124.

that should believe. It seems then the Apostles (as *Irenæus* saith) did deliver their Churches to Bishops. They therefore (as *Saint Hierom* saith) were the Successors of the Apostles. And succeed them they did, not only in the government of the Church, but also in its daily Ministrations; thence no doubt it is, that *Saint Paul* requires a Bishop should be apt to teach, and gives Bishop *Timothy* direction about himself, and his doctrine, the worship of God, and prayers of the Church: These things were looked on as so peculiarly the Bishops duty, as that in the Apostles Canons (if they be theirs) the Bishop is said to be intrusted with the people of the Lord, and an account of their souls shall be required from him. And therefore by another of the same Canons, it is provided that the Bishop should take the care of the Clergy and people to teach them Piety. And the Council of *Carthage* decreed, that the Bishops should not neglect the people pertaining to them.

If then in those early dayes of the Gospel, *E-paphras* were Bishop of *Colosse*, it seems that he was not only to govern and exercise discipline, but also to perform all other Ministerial offices among them; and so doubtless he did while he was present with them, but at the Writing of this Epistle he was not at home, but with *Saint Paul* at *Rome*. The occasion of his so being it seems was thus; there were some crept in among the *Colossians*, very apt to beguile them, with

with inticing words, whereby they mixed *Philosophy* with *Theology*, and confounded Christ ^{Cap 2.} with *Moses*, insomuch that the Church of *Colosse* was in great danger of being corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; hereupon their good Bishop *Epaphras* resolved upon a voyage to *Rome*, to declare to Saint *Paul* (at that time a prisoner there) the faith and order that he had settled among the *Colossians*, together with the sentiments of the Innovators; that so he might obtain this Epistle to confirm the Faith of wavering Christians, and extirpate the seeds of Heresie and Schism that were sown among them. Now during his absence, it seems to me most probable, that he had appointed *Archippus* to be his ^{το-τοῦ-ἑν-τῶ-ν} his Vicar or Vicegerent: Not that *Archippus* had Episcopal Authority in its full extent and latitude, but that in *Epaphras* his place and stead he was at that time the ^{προβυστῶς} at *Colosse*, the Provost or President in all their religious Assemblies, one that took care of and had the greatest part to perform in the worship of God among them: and this I think was the Ministry whereunto he was to take heed, and that is the next thing to be considered.

The Greek ^{βλέπει}, saith Saint *Chrysostom*, ^{φοβῶντος} ^{ἐν τῷ ῥήματι} is a word of one that would strike terror or at least caution into his hearer, as when Saint *Paul* saith to the *Philippians*, ^{βλέπετε πρὸς κύριον}, *Phil. 3. 2.*
and

Col. 2. 8.

1 Cor. 8. 2.

and to the *Colossians*, Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἐν τῷ συλαγωγᾷ, and to the *Corinthians* Βλέπετε ὃ μή πως ἡ ἰσχυρία ὑμῶν περὶ κωμαίνῃ, &c. and thus, saith he, the Apostle every where speaketh, when he would put men in fear or make them cautious. The duty then that in this sense he requires of *Archippus* isto be solicitous and cautious least by any means he should neglect his Ministry.

That neither the necessities of his body, nor the exigences of his family, that neither the ease or pleasure of his flesh, the pride or elation of his mind, the curiosities of science or delights of humane learning, much less should the profits or riches, the pomps and luxuries, the dignities or promotions, or any other cologuing vanities of the world, call him off from his Ministry. Not that *Archippus* should weaken his body by neglecting it, or be worse than an Infidel in not providing for his family; nor need he to think himself destined to poverty, or doomed to perpetual melancholy by his office, as if either his Religion or that were a contradiction to Nature, and tyed him up from the regular and sober enjoyment of Gods blessings in the midst of opportunities of enjoying, as if all that is delightful in this state of imperfection and mortality were by a kind of envy in providence sealed up from him under the Character of unlawful, or interdicted with a touch not, tast not, handle not. No surely, *Archippus* need
not

not be so nice or squeamish, but he should know that though *all things are lawful to him*, yet *all things are not expedient*; though *all things be lawful for him*, yet *he should not be brought under the power of any*. He should so untack his soul from matter and set his heart so loose from all earthly enjoyments, as that no inordinate appetite might either enslave him to them or engage him in offensive or undecent pursuit of them, or divert him from the work of his Ministry.

1 Cor. 6. 12.

And as not the allurements of the world on the one hand, so neither the discouragements he found on the other should make him neglect his Ministry; neither narrowness of fortune or destitution of friends, neither meanness of condition or despair of amendment in it; no nor yet persecutions or the justest fear of death itself; much less might the infidelity of Atheists or contradictions of sinners, the slanders and dishonest dealings of some, or the perverse disputings of others, neither the artifices of Seducers or the petulance of their followers; no nor yet should lukewarmness or coldness, heedlessness or affected ignorance, or any untoward untractable temper in the *Colossians*; no nor yet contempt of his person, gifts or office among them, should ever make *Archippus* unmindful of his Ministry: But he should so buoy up his Spirits and assistance in God, his zeal for him and obligations unto him, as that with an holy magnanimity

mity and gallantry of mind, he may remove some and despise other discouragements in the exercise of his Ministry. Neither is that all,

For certainly this βλέπε διακονίαν imports inspection into the Ministry and serious consideration of it, such as disposed *Archippus* to fit and prepare himself for the fulfilling of it. For βλέπειν denotes such an intention of the mind as casts, and fixeth the eyes upon their object. Thus the ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα is not one that barely sees, but one that doth behold, consider, and look upon a Woman with some intention and earnestness. And thus when Saint *Paul* said to the *Ephesians*, βλέτετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς διακονεῖτε, his meaning is that they should do their endeavour, and give diligence to walk circumspectly: Thus also here when he saith to *Archippus*, Take heed, (*i.e.*) attend unto and consider thy Ministry, do not shut thine eyes upon it or turn them away from it, but look upon it with care and consideration, give thy mind, and bend thy study towards it, make it thy business and the work of thy life. If then this be the importance of the word, manifest it is, that *Archippus* his duty was to study to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. To this end he was (*as Timothy*) to give attendance to reading, not only in publick that others might hear the Scriptures, but also in private, that he himself being learned in them, might be an able Minister of

Mat 5. 28.

Ephes. 5. 15.

Vid. Ansel.
in loc.

2 Tim. 2. 15.

1 Tim 4. 13.

of the *New Testament*, not of the Letter but of the Spirit. To this end also, he was to meditate on the things he read, to give himself wholly to them, that his profiting might appear unto all. And all but need,

For *Archippus* was so to take heed to the Ministry, as that he might *fulfil it*. That's the end of his caution, and the design of his required care. Not that he might get or keep a Living, gather applause, or uphold a reputation by it, but that he might *fulfil it*. (*i. e.*) That he might perform all the parts of his Office in a due manner, or that he might rightly do all those things, which by vertue of his Ministry were incumbent on him. To discover what those were, I thought here to have shewed; that those duties which the Church of *England* now requires of us, were by those days required of the Primitive Presbyters; and if so, then *Archippus* his duty was (not as the Popish Priests to offer propitiatory Sacrifices for the quick and the dead) but to read the holy Scriptures, and the Prayers of the Church according to the custom or appointment of it; to Preach the Word, and to Catechise; to administer the Sacraments, both of Baptism and the Lords-Supper; and (as occasion required) to instruct the ignorant, and reprove the wicked, to visit the sick, and absolve the penitent, to conferre with Recusants, and reclaim them (if he could) from
D their

A Visitation Sermon.

their Errors. But it being needles and too large to speak of these things distinctly, I shall wave them, and onely observe, that *Archippus* could not so take heed to his Ministry as to fulfill it, unless he did perform them all in a due manner; for very manifest it is, it was possible for him so superficially and slightly, so irreverently and carelessly to have done them, as that every eye might have seen that he took but little or no heed unto them. He could not therefore be said to take heed to his Ministry, that he might *fulfill it*, unless he did perform the several parts and duties of it, as they ought to be performed: not that *Archippus* was to study how to speak with the enticing words of mans Wisdom, that he might have praise from men; but that he was in the exercise of his Ministry to keep a Conscience void of offence both towards God, and towards all men; and in order hereunto it was necessary for him to be faithfull, holy, and constant therein.

1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. *Archippus* was a Minister of Christ, A Steward of the Mysteries of God; moreover it is required in Stewards that a man be found faithfull; faithfull to his Lord, and Faithfull to his fellow-servants, and therefore *Archippus* was to do the work of his Ministry, not for fear of men or love of filthy lucre, but out of Conscience towards God, in singleness of Heart as unto the Lord,

Lord, and not unto men: for without this singleness towards Christ, he would hardly be found so faithful unto men, as to give unto every one his portion; Doctrine to whom Doctrine, Comfort to whom Comfort, Reproof to whom Reproof, Correction to whom Correction, Instruction to whom Instruction was due, according to the will and commandment of his Lord and Master.

Nor was it possible for him to take due heed unto his Ministry, without endeavours to fulfill it in his life as well as in the exercise of his Function. The scope and design of his Ministry (we know) was to teach and dispense the Gospel: and what, I pray, is the Gospel? is it a piece of Book-learning that floats in the Brain like empty froth or bubbles in the Sea? no surely there is more in it than so; *For the Lord preparing us for a life to come after the Resurrection, proposeth to us the whole Evangelical Conversation, i. e. not to be angry or impatient, to be undefiled from the love of pleasure, and unspectled from the World: But this is a kind of Negative Righteousness, more fit for a Pharisee than a Christian: know therefore that those things which are in that life by the necessity of its Nature, the Lord prescribes to be done in this by the freedom of our choice: so that if any one defining the Gospel should say, It is the form or pattern of the life to come after the Resurrection, he*

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A Visitation Sermon.

Despir. fanc.
Cap. 15.

1 Iohn 3. 2.

Vid. Hieron.
Olor. de Reg.
Instr. lib. 6.

22

22

2 Cor. 5. 8.

seems not to me to have missed the Mark, saith Saint Basil: But what life is that that is to come after the Resurrection? why it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him. The end therefore and the scope of the Ministry is to impregnate mens Souls with such a Religion, as springing and flourishing from due Piety towards God, causeth an ardent love and imitation of the Eternal Beauty. *Archippus* therefore must be transformed by the renewing of his mind, and the holiness of his life, otherwise he cannot so take heed to his Ministry, as to be accepted with God, or so fulfill it as to be believed among men. The fruit of the Lips without holiness of Life, God will not accept; and a Protestation palpably against Action men will not believe. It seems therefore that holiness of Life is a Duty, not onely of Christianity in general, but the Ministry in particular. Holiness of living, and probity of manners conciliate Authority, and facilitate belief: but moral Vice and Wickedness abates the one, and obstructs the other by drawing contempt upon the Ministry it self. Thence was it that the Apostles gave no offence in any thing, *that the Ministry should not be blamed:* whereby 'tis plain, that the Ministry is apt to suffer by the bad *Ethicks* of its Defendants, as well as by the *Logick* of its Opponents, and perhaps more by them than by the best of that. It is indeed

indeed unreasonable to take the dirt of mens manners, and throw it in the face of the Ministry: but those that are ignorant cannot, and those that are malicious will not distinguish between the faults of a mans person and his Function. It was therefore *Archippus* his duty as well as *Timothy's*, *To be an example of Believers in word, conversation and charity; in spirit, faith and purity.* Thus should he adorn his Profession, and give access unto the work of his Ministry. 1 Tim 4.12.

Wherein also he ought to continue and be constant: as long as he had it to do, and health and strength to perform it, he could hardly with a good Conscience retire to a private life, and cease from it: he was *to take heed to himself and to his Doctrine*, not that he might save his Labour or his Lungs, but that he might both live and speak those things which become sound Doctrine, shewing himself a *pattern of good works* in his life, and of *uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity* in his Doctrine. And this he was to do not only on some certain dayes and times of the year, but continually; for he was *to continue in them, that he might save both himself and them that heard him*: whereby 'tis plain, that unless *Archippus* did continue in his Ministry, he had little reason to hope that he should save either himself or his Hearers. He was therefore constantly to take heed to his Ministry that he might fulfil it: and good reason Tit. 2.7.
1 Tim. 4.16.

A Vistation Sermon.

reason too. And thus am I fallen on the last thing in my Text, *viz.*

The reason of *Archippus* his Duty, or his Obligations to perform it, contained in these words, *Which thou hast received in the Lord.*

Archippus was none of the gifted Brethren, that because they can talk fluently mysterious non-sense in Scripture-language wrested, do take upon them the work of the Ministry: but he received it, 'twas one of the *χρηματα*, or gracious gifts of the holy Ghost, which by his Ordination was conferred upon him, and therefore let him take heed unto it: for the *manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall*; not to promote vain-glory, or foment Factions, but *αὐτὸ τὸ συμφέρον*, to the common good and benefit both of the Receiver and of the whole Community wherein he received it, or is obliged to use it. This Talent therefore *Archippus* must not hide in a Napkin, but take heed unto it, to use and imploy it: for to this he had received it: And that

In the Lord, (i. e.) *διὰ κυρίου*, saith Saint Chrysostom, *in his quæ Domini sunt*, saith, Saint Anselm, *secundum præcepta Domini*, saith Grotius. For my part I shall not undertake to umpire between them, but only to observe that this Particle of my Text may admit a threefold reference,

A Visitation Sermon.

23

rence, viz. either to *Archippus* his Ministry, or to his reception of it; or to his duty to take heed unto it; in the first, Saint *Anselms*, in the second, Saint *Chrysostoms*, in the third, *Grotius*, his interpretation his very true and genuine.

In reference to *Archippus* his Ministry, this *in the Lord*, will certainly be most naturally rendered *in the things of the Lord*, or *in rebus divinis*, as *Lyra* notes. For evident it is, that *Archippus* was no Minister of State, nor was his Ministry conversant about the pomps and Pageants, the glozing grandeur and vanities of the World, the lusts and luxuries of the flesh, or the base and low things of the earth; but the infinitely more weighty and noble affairs of the kingdom of Heaven, those things wherein the glory of God, the honour of the Lord, and the eternal welfare of immortal souls are chiefly concerned did especially fall within the compass of his Ministry, and therefore let *Archippus* take heed unto it. What care and caution, what diligence and circumspection, what study and fidelity can be too much, or indeed enough in matters of so high a nature? *Who is sufficient for these things?*

But again, this Particle *in the Lord* may be considered as it lies in my Text, viz. in reference to *Archippus* his reception of his Ministry, and then Saint *Chrysostomes* by the Lord, will be

be the fittest interpretation of it; *because* (as he saith) *it was not the Colossians, but Christ that gave it him, it was not they, but God that committed it to him.* Not that *Archippus* received his Ministry (as *Saint Paul* did *his*) by immediate revelation; but that his Office was of divine Institution, it derived its authority from God, and *Archippus* was put into it by the disposition of his Laws; he therein therefore was the Minister of God or Servant of the Lord, set about his work, and *curst* (you know) *is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently.* *Archippus* therefore was highly concerned to take heed to his Ministry, and very unworthy if he did not; for having received it by or from the Lord, he thereby became an *Ambassadour for Christ.* He was thereby sent to espouse his interest, and assert his right, to negotiate his affairs and promote his honour in the world, by bringing himself and others *to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,* (i.e.) to such a state as that they may be full of Christ, his knowledge and holiness, his grace and goodness; an employ that's worthy of Angels and the Spirits of just men made perfect! but *we have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* Yet it reflects a very great and transcendent honour upon us. How vile and base, how disingenuous and unworthy would *Archippus* be, if he should neglect it? therefore also let him take heed unto it. For, He

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Eph 5. 13.

A Visitation Sermon.

25

He received it that he might fulfil it in the Lord. *Grotius* observes an *Hebraisme* in the Text, *Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.* (i. e.) saith he, *Take heed that thou fulfil in the Lord the Ministry which thou hast received.* This particule therefore he referrs to *Archippus* his duty, and so renders the sense of it *secundum præcepta Domini*, Take heed, that thou fulfil thy Ministry according to the Commands of the Lord. When the Lord ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men. Now these gifts, whether of operation 1 Cor. 12, 5, 6. or administration (as Saint *Paul* distinguishes) ought to be employed and improved to the benefit of those for whom they were given, and the glory of him that gave them. *Archippus* his Ministry was therefore a Talent wherewith the Lord had entrusted him, expecting that he should improve it, and at length he would reckon with him about it. If at that *Audit* it be found that *Archippus* hath rightly took heed unto it, that he might fulfil it, then shall he have the honour and happiness to be called good and faithful Servant, and to enter into the joy of the Lord. But if it be found, that he was so negligent and lazy, as to bury it in the earth (designing to gain nothing but earthly enjoyments by it) whatever the success was in that design, it will not plead his cause in the Court of Heaven, or save him from impeachment for sloth and wickedness; whereof being found guilty, he shall be condemned out of his own mouth, shame-

shamefully deprived of his Talent, eternally deposed from his Ministry: and cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. If *Archippus* considers these things, methinks either the love of God, or the joy of his Lord should constrain him, or else his terror persuade him to take heed to his Ministry that he fulfil it.

And these things Brethren I have (as it were in a Figure) transferred unto you and my self; that we might learn or at least be put in mind, not so much what was *Archippus* his duty, as what is ours. Which God of his mercy grant us all wisdom, and grace to perform, and so pour upon us the dew of his blessing, as that we may both save ourselves and them that hear us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory and praise world without end. Amen.

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